



ENTRAIDE &
FRATERNITE



FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
of the 2017-2021 Entraide & Fraternité-DGD programme
"Making the Earth turn fair: Food Sovereignty for all"

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3 – GUATEMALA

April, 2022

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

of the 2017-2021 Entraide & Fraternité-DGD programme

"Making the Earth turn fair: Food Sovereignty for all"

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3 – GUATEMALA

Authors: Mildred Guerrero, Montse Urbina, Serge Eric Yakeu

Cover photo: PH.2 Harvesting coulfiflowers. Chuicuimes, Concepción Sololá

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In general terms, the program **"Making the Earth turn fair: Food Sovereignty for all"**, implemented in Guatemala between 2017 and 2021 by E&F and five local partner organizations, shows significant progress in its contribution toward its strategic objective.

The program provided technical support and accompaniment to community associations from 31 communities in the departments of San Marcos, Totonicapán and Sololá, to raise their awareness about their rights in terms of alimentation, food sovereignty and generate a change and commitment that allow them to achieve their autonomy in food production, marketing sale capacities and the start-up of income-generating activities.

In this search, the program implemented the following strategies: Capacity building of teams of agricultural promoters to strengthen small scale enterprises based on agroecology and solidarity economy, to access financial resources, improve the basic food basket, and strengthen women's economic participation; Sensitization and communication to strengthen gender equity, the defense of their right for food and the environment; Political advocacy in coordination with local platforms and community government structures for developing and managing public policies favorable to agroecology and food sovereignty in rural areas.

This final evaluation, which followed a summative and non-experimental approach and was based on appreciative, inclusive, and gender-based principles. It was participatory and consultative, with the participation of DGD stakeholders, national partners and beneficiaries of the actions in the communities accompanied by the program. The evaluation used mixed, quantitative and qualitative methodologies, such as documentary review, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and structured observations in the field, to analyze: the processes and the context, the obstacles and bottlenecks, the execution approaches, the management and monitoring system, risks and mitigation measures, sustainability strategies and systemic barriers. These analyses determined the factors that have allowed or hindered progress towards the expected results. Findings were triangulated among sources and methods to ensure the reliability of data collected.

Results and conclusions

Relevance and adaptability. The intervention is highly relevant since it responds to fundamental structural problems that have been identified over years of work with the participating populations, as those that impede the comprehensive development of these peoples and violate their rights to food security and sovereignty. The program has been formulated participatively with the local partner organizations, and its strategies are part of its lines of action and institutional objectives and nourished by its work experience in these territories, with a comprehensive approach that addresses the complexity of the problems and their causes. In the same way, the intervention involves the relevant local actors to achieve the planned results, and takes into account the legislative and cultural frameworks of the context in which it is implemented.

On the other hand, the program has been able to adapt to unexpected circumstances during its years of execution, making the pertinent changes to meet the priorities and needs of the groups with which it works, without losing focus on the strategic objectives traced.

Effectiveness. The program has effectively achieved its specific objective in supporting farmers' organisations and community associations to improve their livelihoods and self-management systems. The promotion of family agroecological initiatives has been the most effective among the three strategies implemented. The improvement in the economic and nutritional conditions, has achieved changes in gender relations among families, notably for women who can sell their products in the markets.

The strategy of raising awareness of the principles of agroecology, responsible consumption and food sovereignty through communication and awareness campaigns, were also effective. However, the third component, political advocacy, although it managed to train many women in skills, abilities and knowledge to hold positions of responsibility and carry out advocacy actions, was not as effective as expected in ensuring their access to decision-making spaces, nor to commit the authorities in the implementation of policies favorable to the sovereignty and food security of the people.

In terms of cross-cutting approaches, it has been possible to incorporate the gender approach in all actions effectively, but less progress towards the inclusion of the young people was made.

The main obstacles that limited the effectiveness of the program's actions were: the substantial power imbalances between men and women that persist at the community level; the lack of interest of young people in agricultural activities; land tenure schemes, that deny access of women and young people to their property; the country's political environment, which favors the interests of the agro-export industry to the detriment of those of the population and small farmers in the countryside; and the climate variability, which affects the availability of water to ensure crop production.

Efficiency. Although the funds available to the program were insufficient to cover some of its needs, especially concerning the hiring of specialized personnel to carry out specific actions, the program made an efficient use of the resources available, due to synergies between partner organizations and with other strategic partners, which made it possible to carry out all the planned actions. The flexibility and strategic vision of the program management also made it possible to have the necessary adjustments and adaptations to address changes in the priorities and conditions of the context and the population subject to the program, caused by unexpected events such as the Covid-19 crisis, without losing focus on the planned strategic objectives.

Sustainability. The results of the program have high social, technological and cultural sustainability, since they have left in the communities a social capital formed and with installed capacities to strengthen the social changes promoted, continue with the productive initiatives implemented and transmit their new knowledge, principles and practices to other members of their families and communities. The techniques and strategies put into practice are based on the resources of the territory, the knowledge and ancestral traditions of the target population, and the participants' priorities, who have developed a strong appropriation of these skills, incorporating them within their means of subsistence, and generating a demonstrative effect that makes them easily appropriated by their relatives and neighbors. The incorporation of these strategies within the lines of action of the partner organizations, supports the alignment with their institutional objectives, generates the commitment to give them continuity and increases the sustainability of the program's results.

However, the condition of the extreme economic vulnerability of the families and the threats of the context, especially concerning climate variability and the availability of land for crop production, constitute key challenges for the sustainability of the achieved results.

Impact. In the short and medium-term, the main effects of the program can be identified as the empowerment of women, with the increase in their self-esteem and the putting into practice of their leadership capacities; the improvement in the autonomy and economic production capacity of the women who participated in the training, production and entrepreneurship actions; changes in gender relations within families, motivated by new attitudes and activities of women; improvement in the availability of varied, fresh and healthy foods in participating families and communities; increased community awareness about the importance of agroecology, food sovereignty and responsible consumption.

In the medium and long term, the program can contribute to the achievement of impacts such as the Valuation of food sovereignty as a collective right; the promotion of the use of appropriate production technologies; Changes in patterns of consumption and use of natural resources; the reduction of gender and intra-family violence; the reduction of child malnutrition in Guatemala.

Recommendations

For local partners

1. Work on participatory diagnoses with children and young people, to find keys that allow them to stay in the countryside and join agroecological production activities. Take advantage of the potential of digital communication media and the skill and interest that new generations have in its handling, to incorporate them into programs aimed at young people.
2. Systematize the lessons learned from Sustainable Schools experience in order to propose coordination plans between agroecological organizations and educational institutions, where, in addition to teach the benefits of agroecology and responsible consumption, contribute to value the identity, ancestral knowledge and traditions of these knowledge among childhood and adolescence.
3. Strengthen the promotion of rural agroecological markets, which benefit communities with the availability of fresh and healthy food, and give an outlet to the productive surpluses of local producers. Markets are also spaces of exchange of knowledge and dissemination of capacities and strategies between the producers and their neighbors.
4. Incorporate work with men in the mainstreaming of the gender approach. Incorporating the gender approach also with children and adolescents, both in families and in schools, is the only way to overcome gender inequalities in future generations.
5. Work on access to remote communication technologies for the inhabitants of rural communities, based on knowledge of the conditions of their specific context, not only in training abilities, but with municipal governments to close the gaps that prevent the use of these technologies. Investigate how to innovate to translate popular education methodologies into tools for distance learning.
6. Work on community water management, an essential element to promote agroecological production and food sovereignty, establishing articulations and agreements with non-state organizations that today manage these services.

For local partners and E&F

7. Address access to land tenure in rural communities by women and young people, so that they can integrated training and entrepreneurship programs for agroecological production, with guarantee on their benefits. Promote community diagnostics on the effects of inequity in access to ownership of land that affects women and work with municipal governments seeking that rural producer associations could have access to municipal land banks.
8. Incorporate the issue of climate change in the political advocacy agenda, because the adaptation and mitigation actions that agroecological producers can take will never be enough to face a problem that requires a mobilization of resources and services that only public institutions can assume.
9. Support mainstreaming of the intergenerational approach, accompanying organizations themselves to analyze how intergenerational relationships occur within farmers groups including young people.. Follow the example of the gender driven by cooperation at first, but now fully incorporated into organizations.

For E&F:

10. Continue to encourage the establishment of association agreements between organizations, which is flexible enough to allow the different strengths of each of them to be deployed, and guided by common strategic and political objectives, rather than by the fulfillment of activities, so that they can be incorporated into their institutional agendas and working methodologies.

1. INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

Cover photo: PH.3 Gray water filter installation. Xebe, Santa María Chiquimula

1. The subject of this final evaluation is the Guatemalan chapter of the program “*Making the Earth Fair: Food Sovereignty for All*” (DGD 2017-2021), financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation and executed by Entraide et Fraternité in partnership with five local organizations with which association and collaboration agreements were signed.
2. The evaluation covers the entire program implemented in Guatemala between 2017 and 2021 and all its effects and results. Its main objective is to measure the achievement of results with a view to accountability, monitoring, and improvement of interventions, to identify lessons learned from experience to support learning and improve impact.
3. The analysis of these results has been based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance (OECD/DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, and taking into account cross-cutting themes such as gender, environment and human rights.
4. The specific objectives of the evaluation are:
 - Accountable to all parties involved in the program (E&F, public and private donors, local and strategic partners, beneficiaries)
 - Guide E&F and its partner organizations in making adjustments to the theory of change and in the execution of the next five-year program (2022-2026)
 - Contribute to transversal learning and exchange between countries.
5. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, this evaluation assesses the final implementation of the programme by identifying strengths and constraints, and the extent to which the specific objectives and their underlying results have been achieved from a quantitative and qualitative point of view, for the beneficiary in general and in a differentiated way for women and men. Finally, based on the evidence collected, the evaluation formulates programmatic recommendations and strategic orientations for future interventions.
6. The main users of the evaluation are the E&F's partner organisations, Entraide et Fraternité, and the DGD.

2. OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION



2. OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

Cover photo: PH.4 Producer of cosmetics and natural ointments, Xepatuj II, Nahualá

7. The program *Making the earth turn fair: Food sovereignty for all*, was implemented in Guatemala between 2017 and 2021 by Entraide and Fraternité (E&F) and five partner local associations: COINDI, CEIBA, SERJUS, CDRO and the KUCHUB'AL Network, in four departments of the southwestern Guatemalan highlands of the country, which are: San Marcos, Totonicapán and Sololá. The program is part of a broader program, implemented in 8 countries on three continents, which aims to promote the transition towards fairer and more sustainable food systems, within a vision of social justice that denounces the obstacles that prevent peoples' right to food, promoting initiatives that strengthen these food systems and fostering exchanges and links between actors.

8. Guatemala is a country rich in natural resources and with a gross domestic product classified as medium, which, however, exhibits the highest rates of malnutrition in the American continent, in a context of extreme economic and social inequalities, which condemn a large part from childhood in the country to a life marked by malnutrition.¹ Child malnutrition, which in 2021 increased by 16.4% compared to the previous year, according to official statistics from the Secretariat of Food and Nutritional Security (Sesan), affects one in two children in the country, the 46.5%, especially in rural regions, where the population is mostly of Mayan origin, and where a diet based almost exclusively on corn tortillas causes permanent damage to children.

9. The loss of livelihoods that occurred in 2020 due to hurricanes Eta and Iota affected 4.6 million people in Central America according to UNICEF estimates, especially in rural areas, where poverty rates skyrocketed, that were already extremely high: “(...) malnutrition is 60 times higher in some rural indigenous schools (in which it even reaches 100%) than in mestizo schools in the capital, in which it does not exceed 1.7%.”²

10. A situation comparable to that produced by wars, in a country in peace for almost four decades, which occurs amid the indifference of society, which makes the problem invisible, and of the government, which only applies palliative measures. According to doctor Carlos Arriola, who has been treating food insecurity for 30 years, “this is a political strategy to maintain the circles of poverty”³, which comes from the colony, and perpetuates the circle of poverty in which the Indigenous people are the most trapped, even when they are almost half of the country population.

11. Paradoxically, Guatemala is one of the largest producers and exporters of sugar cane, bananas, cocoa, cardamom, and coffee in Central America, but in recent decades, food products for mass consumption have been suffering from a progressive shortage that has placed them outside the reach of the most disadvantaged sectors of the population. It is a phenomenon that has to do with the relationship between land use, the extensive monoculture model, and the right to food, in a country where in recent years, the land used for sugar cane and other agro-export products has doubled, in what some experts call “a battle for land in which corn for food competes with two monocultures destined for export, African palm, and sugar cane.”⁴

12. The land ownership structure concentrates large amounts of land in very few hands, such as those of the five largest producers integrated into the hegemonic Association of Sugar Producers of Guatemala, which control 75% of sugar and 100% of agroethanol production in the country. The amount of land devoted to

¹ UNICEF: Desnutrición en Guatemala. <https://www.unicef.es/noticia/desnutricion-en-guatemala>

² Noor Mahtani, EL PAÍS, 01/11/2021: Los platos vacíos de Guatemala. <https://elpais.com/planeta-futuro/2021-11-01/los-platos-vacios-de-guatemala.html#?rel=mas>

³ Noor Mahtani, EL PAÍS, 16/02/2022: La desnutrición en Guatemala es una estrategia política. <https://elpais.com/planeta-futuro/que-mueve-a/2022-02-16/la-desnutricion-en-guatemala-es-una-estrategia-politica.html>

⁴ Alberto Arce. FRONTERA D, 01/12/2011: ¿Provoca hambre el modelo agrícola guatemalteco? <https://www.fronterad.com/provoca-hambre-el-modelo-agricola-guatemalteco/>

producing these and other agricultural items for export has been increasing, to the detriment of that dedicated to the production of food products for the domestic market. A process of crop substitution that follows the logic of the international markets of raw materials prices, the ones that, ultimately, define the uses of the land, and which pollutes the soil and water, degrades biodiversity, deforests the territories, and violates the right to food security of the population.

13. By increasing extensive monoculture, which competes with the smallholding of rural producers, the price of land skyrockets. The peasant, who can no longer survive on what is produced by his small land decimated by subdivisions, extreme weather conditions, and poor agricultural practices, is forced to sell his land and/or his workforce, and becomes a laborer at the service of large export agricultural production companies. Meanwhile, the government promotes the importation of corn by lowering tariffs within the Free Trade Agreements, and in the countryside, there are more and more conflicts over land, in which peasants are evicted, often violently and at the cost of their own lives.

14. In this context, the strategic objective of the program “*Making the Earth Fair: Food Sovereignty for All*” is to achieve a fairer and more sustainable food system based on the principles of agroecology, through technical support and accompaniment to rural communities to raise awareness about their rights in terms of food and food sovereignty, generate change, and a commitment that allows them to achieve the autonomy of their means of production, the structuring of their sales capacities and the start-up of income-generating activities.

15. Agroecology, which is defined as a movement and practice led by stakeholders, to be supported but not led by science and politics, is interpreted by E&F as a call for the experience of small food producers to be recognized and places itself at the center of the politics and governance of food systems, giving citizens the right to define their food and agricultural policy.

16. In this way, agroecology, which is inseparable from food sovereignty, promotes a set of principles and values that must be interpreted in each territory in order to improve its integration with nature, justice and dignity of human beings and other living species, resulting in the gradual application of various practices adapted to different territories and contexts.

17. The strategy of the program in Guatemala is based on the strengthening of agroecological and food systems, the creation of micro-enterprises, and the commercialization of products, involving women and young people in the activities, in processes accompanied by information and awareness campaigns in the communities, and meetings for the exchange of experiences among farmers. The program informs communities about alternatives in agroecology, food sovereignty, environment conservation and climate change, to strengthen their production and self-management systems, integrating equity of gender and generational, based on the Mayan worldview, which tends to unity and complementarity between men and women. The process promotes the participation of community leaders, women and young people in territorial and sectoral platforms that constitute spaces for dialogue and reflection on sustainable rural development strategies, to prepare concerted plans and proposals to be presented in the communities and to other public and associative actors. For its implementation, E&F has established strategic partnerships with the organizations COINDI, CEIBA, CDRO, RK and SERJUS.

18. CDRO (Cooperation for Western Rural Development), created in 1981, and COINDI (Indigenous Cooperation for Integral Development), created in 1986, are federative structures of the indigenous communities that constitute them, which aim at the integral development of these communities, emphasizing community participation, Mayan identity and gender equity. SERJUS (Legal and Social Services) is an NGO founded in 1988 that, based on popular education methodologies, supports the development and consolidation of community associations in indigenous regions, seeking to articulate them as a political counterpower at the regional and national levels. The CEIBA association is an indigenous NGO that, since its foundation in 1993, has specialized in promoting sustainable agriculture through training, technical assistance and support for Mayan communities. The KUCHUB'AL network (RK) is a branch of the Land Pastoral of San Marcos' Diocese created in 2005 to facilitate the commercialization of the products of community associations active in the sector of agroecology and solidarity economy.

19. The program's specific objective is that 31 communities and eight community associations build territorial and sectoral platforms to improve their production and self-management systems, integrating gender and generational equality within their organizations, in the municipalities of: Totonicapán, San Francisco El Alto, Momostenango and Santa María Chiquimula in the department of Totonicapán; Sibinal, Tacaná and Malacatán in the department of San Marcos; and Sololá, Nahuala and Concepción Sololá in the department of Sololá.

20. The strategies of the program are:

- Strengthening the capacities of the teams of promoters of producer families through the agroecological approach, the environmental approach, gender equity and, fundamentally, the defense of food sovereignty and biodiversity, which are essential to strengthen agrifood systems.
- Through the rural economy, strengthen enterprises so that people have access to financial resources to complement the basic food basket and strengthen women's economic participation.
- Sensitization and communication to strengthen relations in gender equity, defense of the right to food, defense of the environment, solidarity economy. A campaign was set up to work with the communities, leaders, families and other CSOs articulated in the municipalities
- Political incidence in articulation with smaller, local platforms, through the country's economic and social development system, which are the COCODE, COMUSAN, etc. Some of the CSOs did this work with public policies, and other parts did it with community authorities.

3. METHODOLOGY



3. METHODOLOGY

Cover photo: PH.5 Interview with agroecological producer. Santa María Chiquimula

21. The evaluation was based on the analysis of the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, also considering issues related to the Covid-19 crisis and specific gender aspects, integrated into the analyses.

22. The evaluation team made an initial review of the program documents to adjust the evaluation questions proposed in the ToR, and break down some of them into sub-questions in order to collect more precise and specific information in the primary data collection phase, and elaborated the evaluation matrix, where each question is related to the evaluation criteria and the key informants to answer it.

3.1. Framework and methodological approach

23. The evaluation adopted a **summative stance** by which the evaluators participatively reconstructed and critically appraised the logical model of how the program's actions have led to the expected results.

24. The evaluation has a **participatory and consultative nature**, with the participation of the interested DGD parties, the national partners and the beneficiaries of the actions in the communities accompanied by the program. Given the variety of stakeholders, contexts and associated cultural attitudes, the evaluation has adopted a **non-experimental approach**, mapping stakeholders, outputs/results and implementation sites. Based on this mapping, a structured documentary review, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and structured observations have been carried out in selected localities, to analyze: the process and the context, obstacles and bottlenecks, execution approaches, management and monitoring system, risk mapping and mitigation measures, sustainability strategies and systemic barriers. Based on these analyses have been determined the factors that have allowed or hindered progress towards the expected results.

25. An **evaluation matrix** (Annex1) was developed, that combines the main criteria with key evaluation questions and sub-questions, and data collection tools to answer each question based on each category of stakeholder and the information to be collected. The evaluation have **combined mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative)** and have reconstructed the theory of change to investigate the causal relationships between outputs and outcomes. An **information triangulation** system was applied to the data collected from the various identified sources. In this way, the identification of the evidence led to the formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

26. In summary, the evaluation was carried out in three phases: i) the initial phase, ii) data collection, iii) analysis and preparation of the final report.

3.2 Methodological steps

Start-up phase

27. It began with a teleconference discussing aspects of the contract, logistics, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and timeframes for expected deliverables.

28. Sites visited by consultants were selected, with sufficient duplication to allow substitutions. The actors to be consulted in these visits and by telematic means were selected based on their level of involvement and their efforts to carry out the interventions in the country. Annex 3 presents the complete list of people interviewed and visits made.

Data Collection

29. Data collection was carried out through mixed techniques: reviewing program documents and literature on the issues addressed by the intervention, in-depth consultation through interviews and focus groups with key informants, and field observations in field visits.

- **Documentary Review:** The evaluators reviewed all the relevant documents provided by E&F and supplemented them with documents and data available on the Internet, which were pertinent to answer the evaluation questions structured in the matrix, applying a systematic sampling approach and using the analysis of content to gain key insights and identify emerging topics. The documentary review allowed to reconstruct the logic of the intervention, develop an understanding of its context, the execution of its activities, the use of its resources, and seek evidence of its progress towards the expected results and objectives, and of the management of its challenges, to identify the first lessons learned. The list of documents examined is detailed in Annex 2.
- **Application of qualitative methods:** interviews, focus groups and direct observation: The sampling frame for the in-depth consultation covered the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the intervention. To select the key informants and the stakeholders of the groups to be consulted, an intentional and non-random systematic sampling approach was used, proposed by De Vaus (2001), which adequately takes into account the different socioeconomic categories. The following criteria were taken into account: i) Main beneficiary group and/or direct representative of the beneficiary group; ii) Knowledge of the context and participation in the program; iii) Availability (likely); iv) Sex for gender balance; and v) Role and responsibility. Actors who did not intervene directly in the program, but who played an important role in the execution of its activities, were also selected. In this way, the sampling technique adequately reflected the diversity of beneficiaries and stakeholders, paying special attention to the most vulnerable inclusion, participation, and non-discrimination.

PH. 6 and 7 Interviews with agroecological promoters. Racchoquel, Momostenango



PH.8 Focal group with agroecological promoters. Santa María El Tablón, Sololá

PH.9 Focal group with promoter and entrepreneurs. Xepatuj II, Nahualá

30. All data collection tools, such as interview protocols, were explicitly linked to the criteria and specific questions in the evaluation matrix, to ensure that each had a variety of data sources. In total, six semi-structured interviews were conducted online, through Zoom and Teams; and in person, during the field visits, eight semi-structured interviews and 1 focus group were conducted with beneficiaries of the program, and two unstructured interviews with the technicians who accompanied the evaluation team during the journeys to the communities. The list of people consulted is included in the Annex 3.

- **Application of quantitative methods:** Exploitation or secondary analysis of existing quantitative data such as narrative reports, monitoring (performance scores), annual and mid-term evaluation reports, and field observation visits of physical investments done by the program were carried out, documenting how they work and how they benefit direct beneficiaries.

Analysis and production of results

31. Once the data collection was finished, the results were organized by evaluation questions and triangulated to determine to what extent they converge or diversify. Triangulations were made between different sources, data collection methods and between different conceptual frameworks about the sectoral issues addressed by the program. The convergences provided confidence in the results found and allowed conclusions to be drawn. The divergences required a deeper analysis to determine why they have occurred and what are their implications. All analyses considered the sex, age and other socioeconomic characteristics of the interviewees.

32. The content analysis went beyond descriptions of changes in practices and attitudes to identify salient features of these changes, in order to map out the main strengths and weaknesses of the process. Finally, the comparison of the results with the baselines and the results indicators made it possible to evaluate the performance of the program in Guatemala.

4. RESULTS



Cover photo: PH.10 Patio orchard. Racchoquel, Momostenango



4.1 RELEVANCE AND ADAPTABILITY

PH.11 Gray water filter installation, Xebe, Santa María Chiquimula

33. The evaluation of the criteria of relevance and adaptability seeks to answer the following questions of the program evaluation matrix:

- a) **To what extent has the programme respond to the needs and concerns/priorities of the beneficiaries and/or target audiences?**
- b) **To what extent has the programme responded to the needs and concerns/priorities of partners?**
- c) **To what extent does the programme respond to the national priorities of the host countries and the Sustainable Development Goals?**

34. The program is highly relevant for its context, since it responds to several of the most critical problems that have been identified, in years of participatory work with local populations, as essential structural elements that impede their comprehensive development and human rights exercise. In this way, the intervention responds to environmental problems, malnutrition, lack of income, violence, citizen participation and gender and generational inequity, with a comprehensive approach that addresses the complexity of the problems and their causes, and adapts to the conditions and priorities of each of the participating populations.

35. The actions implemented are inserted within the working lines of the partner organizations' strategic plans, periodically reviewed and updated in consultation with the populations they serve, and were planned jointly with these local partners, taking into account previous programs evaluation results, and adapted to intervention territories specificities.

“This program does respond to the needs of the beneficiaries because we always propose a program in consultation with the communities and to respond to Guatemala's structural problems. COINDI has a strategic plan updated every 10 years, and in the meantime, there are evaluations to channel efforts, and all of this is consulted with the rights holders, as well as with community and municipal authorities. In each municipality that Coindi accompanies, women have a municipal agenda, which has been drawn up in a participatory manner with the actors to define the main axes and concrete actions.”

Interview with local partner technical team

"One of the concrete actions of this program is political training with women, which is our work policy. To be able to work on economic empowerment with women, we always have to work hand in hand with political empowerment, where they know their rights, feel they are subjects of rights and are aware of the need to continue looking for decision-making spaces, and seek their economic autonomy. which is essential for its development."
Interview with local partner technical team

36. The strategies implemented are aligned within the legislative and political frameworks, first of universal scope as the Charter of Human Rights, since many of these rights are violated in these territories, but also of a national scope, such as the Constitution of the Republic, the Urban and Rural Development Law and the Food and Nutritional Security Law, trying to influence compliance with these laws, and to counteract some bills that threaten the principles that they establish and seek perpetuate the vulnerability conditions of the indigenous and rural population of Guatemala. In this way, along with the implementation of political advocacy actions at the local and municipal levels, they are part of broader struggles that peasant and indigenous population groups have been carrying out for the defense of rights that are violated by the justice system, currently co-opted by the business sector interests:

"We take actions to counteract some threats at the national level, which are bills that seek to introduce transgenics in Guatemala and favor the use of agro-toxics and agro-poisons, to curb those laws through injunctions and unconstitutionality. We are part of the National Network for the Defense of Food Sovereignty in Guatemala REDSAG, which is a network that connects us to all the organizations in the program, which has managed to provisionally suspend the regulations. We have been in this for about 4 years."
Interview with local partner technical team

37. The intervention has maintained its relevance in the face of context situations that have arisen unexpectedly throughout its five years of implementation, adapting to the new needs and conditions that these situations originated among the populations served and the participating executing organizations themselves. The flexibility and solidarity shown by E&F made it possible to modify times, actions and budget items to attend to humanitarian emergencies such as those first caused by the earthquake in September 2017, which destroyed the homes of several families belonging to the KUCHUB'AL Network, in the municipality of Tacaná, and later due to the Covid 19 pandemic, which in 2020 forced the implementation strategies of the programmed actions to be modified. The mobility restrictions imposed to deal with the pandemic not only prevented the execution of training programs and planned advocacy actions, which had to be rescheduled, but also the transfer of the participating population to their daily places of work and food supply. basic inputs, producing emergency situations that the program was able to attend to in a timely manner in order to move forward.

"The most positive thing is that they are flexible. They behaved very flexible and supportive in the worst of the pandemic. There was flexibility to adjust resources from one item to another, change methodological modalities, buy food for people when that didn't have to eat. That was very good."
Interview with local partner technical team



4.2 EFFECTIVENESS

PH.12 Demonstrative plot, Chuicumes, Concepción Sololá

38. The specific objective of the DGD 2017-202 program was that 31 communities and eight community associations build territorial and sectoral platforms to improve their production and self-management systems, by integrating gender and intergenerational equality within their organizations. The analysis of the effectiveness criterion was carried out through the three programmatic axes implemented to achieve this specific objective, which were:

- Promotion and support for family agroecological initiatives, through training strategies, production, food and marketing of their products.
- Local and regional awareness-raising operations on the importance of agroecology as a strategy for food sovereignty and respect for the environment.
- Participation in political advocacy actions and networks aimed at creating a institutional framework more favorable to food sovereignty, meeting the food needs of indigenous populations and biodiversity.

39. For each one of these axes, the analysis provides answers to the following questions:

- a) **To what extent have the strategies implemented contributed to the achievement of the results?**
- b) **To what extent is the monitoring and support system, in terms of organisation and human resources, the most adequate to achieve the expected results?**
- c) **To what extent is the monitoring and support system, in terms of methodology (tools), the most adequate to achieve the expected results?**
- d) **What are the positive and negative factors that have either helped or hindered the achievement of the expected results?**

1. PROMOTION AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILY AGROECOLOGICAL INITIATIVES, THROUGH TRAINING STRATEGIES, PRODUCTION, FOOD AND MARKETING OF THEIR PRODUCTS

40. In the territories participating in the program, five territorial platforms and two sectoral platforms have been established with governance structures defined and in operation and which are developing coordination actions with other local networks and municipal bodies.

41. In the communities accompanied by CEIBA, the Solidarity Network of Agroecological Producers was created; In the communities that COINDI attends, the Coordinator of Agroecological Promoters was created; In the communities that SERJUS accompanies, the Municipal Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations and the Santa María Integral Development Association were created, as well as two sectoral platforms: the Agricultural Commissions of the municipality of Momostenango and the municipality of Santa María Chiquimula. The KUCHUB'AL Network was established as a territorial platform that brings together the communities with which they work.

42. In the communities accompanied by CDRO, it has not been possible to establish a territorial platform, since it has not been possible to define the most appropriate mechanism for its institution, but it is possible to restructure the Community Front for Food Security and Sovereignty and Nutritional. However, with these seven platforms created within the framework of the program, the planned goal has already been exceeded.

43. Until the end of 2020, 99 women trained as leaders and agroecological promoters have joined these platforms, participating actively in promoting self-management processes for the implementation of plots and family orchards, production and access to economic resources, exchange of agroecological products in local markets and municipal fairs, and political advocacy in community and/or municipal development structures.

“We have formed a network of agricultural promoters. We have all made the organic fertilizer, and the composter was installed in Concepción, in Cristina’s house, where there is enough space and forest for the material we need. We sell the quintal for 65 quetzales. We are very satisfied because it is a great help, our goal as a network is that the producers of the municipality of Concepción learn to harvest only organic products”. Focal group with agroecological promoters

“With the greenhouse, we have managed to keep tomato production for three months. This means that when the price of tomato is high here in the association it is sold at a low price, this allows families, not only members but from other communities, have access to fair prices in the association. In addition, the income is for the self-sustainability of the association”. Focal group with agroecological promoters



PH.13 Tomatoes greenhouse in Santa María Chiquimula PH.14 Seed bank in Santa María El Tablón, Sololá

44. In the training processes for these women, each partner organization implemented methodologies according to their experience and lines of work, in a comprehensive training, where the technical aspects of agroecology, soil protection and water management, financial education, etc, were complemented with political training on rights, gender equity, food sovereignty, and personal strengthening skills in terms of self-esteem, leadership, communication, based on the rescue of the Mayan worldview and ancestral practices of consumption and production.

“A work with ancestral Mayan practices and knowledge, from treatment, respect, balance and harmony with mother nature. This agroecology with a more comprehensive approach, where diversity of plants

was planted in association with corn, with natural medicine, with farm animals, based on defending food sovereignty, native seeds, appropriate technologies, in complementarity and duality with mother nature, not to exploit her but to support her so that she is productive and continues to feed us.”

Interview with local partner technical team

“We have learned all this through practical training and exchanges of experiences. We have known how it is produced in other places.”

Interview with woman agroecological promoter

45. The technical training was theoretical-practical, with exchanges of experiences between different territories, and training sessions that the participants then had to replicate in the field, transmitting the knowledge acquired to the members of their community self-management platforms. The specialist facilitators in the topics taught used popular education methodologies, with cultural relevance and in local languages, based on the participants' experiences, and adapting the schedules and training tools to their needs and possibilities.

“The Serjus leadership school seems very appropriate to me because they carry out training processes and then follow these leaders in the field. They work with a methodology where the people themselves appropriate the instruments to become aware of the problem. And they complement training in agroecological technologies with political training and advocacy skills. They are complementary and cannot be separated, because they feed each other, and because families have to have practical and survival solutions to be able to carry forward processes of protection of the territory.”

Interview with strategic partner technical team

46. The program supported the productive initiatives of the women of the communities with the provision of seeds and plants for the orchards, technologies for water and soil care, rainwater collection and storage systems, drip irrigation, wastewater recycling. Small structures were also implemented for the care of animals, and for the use of their manure in the production of organic fertilizers, and macro-tunnels, which are nurseries for the production of vegetables throughout the year. They were small infrastructures, since in these territories the structure of land tenure is fragmented into very small plots, a product of the subdivision of family properties through generations, which is a fundamental limitation of the productive capacity of the communities and their possibilities to ensure their food sovereignty.



PH.15 Composter in Racchoquel, Momostenango



PH.16 Chicken coop in Santa María Chiquimula

“I have learned how to plant vegetables, make compost, how to cultivate and prepare the land, make concentrate. Now, in addition to vegetables, I also take care of my animals, before I had no experience in planting and taking care of animals, now I have vegetables, herbs, eggs, chickens. It has been a great advantage because you have a way to feed the family and it is healthy, because it does not have chemicals. For the pandemic we have food here, it is also sold in the agroecological market. I have learned to make the concentrate for chickens, it is made from beans, broken corn and eggshells, with this it has been possible for Creole hens to lay many eggs and I sell them.”

Interview with woman agroecological promoter

47. Endowments were also given for the processing of natural products in the manufacture of medicines, cosmetics, processed foods, and furniture for the sale of their productive surpluses in the peasant markets, such as awnings, chairs, and tables.

“An artisanal and agricultural store was opened, where the women of the network of entrepreneurs place their products, which is in the municipal seat of Sololá. On the other hand, they were supported with seed capital, and some bought what they needed for their transformation projects, such as looms, blenders, and containers suitable for making natural medicines, soaps and shampoos.”

Interview with local partner technical team

48. The self-management groups, which seek to develop their capacity for organized action to change the reality in which they live, put into practice collective savings systems, which allow women to have capital to meet specific needs or to start businesses, thanks to the monthly contributions of all the members.

“With my savings, I have been able to take my children to the doctor and buy medicine and support paying the house electricity bill. People like my products, especially shampoo because it prevents hair loss because it is rosemary, natural aloe.”

Interview with woman entrepreneur

49. The work methodology always involves the families of the agroecological producers and the community and municipal authorities, which enhances the impact of the actions, gives recognition and social and institutional support to the implemented changes, and articulates it with the instances that organize markets and fairs where producers bring their products for sale and exchange.

“COINDI’s practice is that we present the program to the new authorities, to do joint work and get logistical support from the municipal authorities. For example, in the municipal seat of Sololá, the relationship has been established with the Economic Development Commission, the Municipal Women’s Office, the Citizen Participation Commission, and in other municipalities we participate in the Municipal Council, to contribute to planning labor council.”

Interview with local partner technical team

50. In the field visits made to six communities included in the program, where interviews were conducted with 12 agroecological promoters, it was possible to verify the operation of the promoted productive initiatives, and learn about the benefits that they have brought to their protagonists, as well as the current problems and limitations.

51. The testimonies of agricultural producers and entrepreneurs show that, in addition to the economic benefit obtained from their orchards and enterprises, they have learned the value and advantages of agroecological practices over traditional ones, and value and are committed to the principles of the model of responsible production and consumption, and with the dissemination of these principles and practices among other producers in their communities:

“We have had access to medicinal plant seeds, vegetables, make organic fertilizer, care for the land, as well as the consumption of healthy foods. This is a great support for the health of our families. We are recovering the knowledge of our grandparents, because they did not use chemicals on crops, in my community there are many vegetable producers, because there are water springs and mini-irrigation, but many chemicals are used. Now, as promoters, we are raising awareness of organic fertilizers and repellents use. Currently, we have worked on organic fertilizer and we have 30 quintals that we are already selling to these farmers, to teach them that chemicals are not good.”

Focal group with agroecological promoter

“With this program, we have improved the quality of our food. In the case of women who do not have land to plant vegetables, we have managed to plant onions, celery, cilantro, medicinal plant, in buckets, clay pots, and even car tires. They are very happy because in addition to practicing planting, they have these plants in their patio, and they save because they do not buy, it is also organic.”

Focal group with agroecological promoter

“Now, as a woman, I can also support my family with money. I thought that only men were in charge of that, but now I deliver dozens of ointments and shampoo every two weeks in some stores and pharmacies in the municipality and my community, and I have my profit.”

Interview with entrepreneur

52. But also, the testimonies revealed the limitations, which, in some cases, significantly reduce the productivity and sustainability of the initiatives supported:

"The problem in production is water, we have gray water that is filtered, but it is not enough for everything that is planted, there is also rainwater, this here in the association's plot. In the women's plots, due to the lack of water, they do not have good production.... In addition, they do not even have money to buy a bucket, and the other accessories for the installation of the filter, and, thus, be able to take advantage of the gray water. In general, the problem is the lack of water."

Focal group with agroecological promoters

"The problem is the lack of water, we have fruit trees, orchards and other plants, but it is not much. We have only managed once a year, and we need food all the time, not just at one time. The water filter is not enough to cover the vegetables all the time."

Interview whit agroecological promoters

PH.17 and 18 Pig farming and Gray water filter, Racchoquel, Momostenango



PH.19 Cereal Atole, Racchoquel, Momostenango; PH.20 Adesma association store, Sta. María Chiquimula

PH.21 Grains silos, Santa María Chiquimula;

PH.22 Organic fertilizer, Chucumés, Concepción Sololá



2. LOCAL AND REGIONAL AWARENESS-RAISING OPERATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AGROECOLOGY AS A STRATEGY FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

53. The strategy of carrying out awareness campaigns in the communities was not part of the initial formulation of the program, in which the local partners had participated, but rather was incorporated at the initiative of E&F, which has the line of communication and awareness within its strategic actions. This incorporation created some imbalances in the first year of implementation of the intervention, in which it did not produce good results.

“As for the communication component, our approach is that it be mainstreamed in all the actions of the program, not as a separate component, but to continue with what we already brought from previous programs, improving it. But that was imposed by E&F, and at the wrong time, and that greatly upset the general approach we had, because to support each of the other results it was important to carry out communication actions that would give strength to each one. (...) what we did was to take from the other components everything that we had foreseen as communications and we put it into this result two, and so it did fit us.”

Interview with local partner technical team

54. The internal evaluation carried out by the five local partners on this strategy, after a first year in which it did not work, evidenced the need to hire a specialized consultancy to formulate a communications plan to be jointly implemented by them. This plan distributed responsibilities among the five organizations, defined the means and tools to be used and the communication products to be designed, and established a campaign monitoring system with indicators to measure the results of each of the actions carried out.

“The second year we did an evaluation and saw that it didn’t work, and the program supported us in a process of reflection at the technical and the community level. What did we want to achieve with the campaign? In this way we became a Commission of the campaign and built a Campaign Plan with ideas from each of the partners, where five themes were established: right to food, environment, agroecology, responsible consumption and solidarity economy.”

Interview with local partner technical team

55. For the implementation of the campaign, the five organizations formed an Alliance for Food Sovereignty, under the coordination of CEIBA and COINDI, which each semester took one of the themes, to promote it transversally in all its actions, and through all their media and networks.

56. Various dissemination tools and educational materials were developed, including commercials, video clips, radio spots, with the participation of community promoters, who through this exercise ensured the effectiveness and suitability of the messages for their target audience, were trained in communication, and generated a strong appropriation of these instruments. To disseminate the designed tools, they used print media, community and commercial radios, local television circuits, social networks and web pages, loudspeakers and the implementation of games for different ages, raffles and contests in communities, markets and agroecological fairs, all translated into local languages. The link with the Guatemalan

Federation of Radio Schools allowed the development of five radio programs broadcasted via Facebook, among other channels.

57. The campaign closed with a Culinary Fair of ancestral dishes held in Quetzaltenango, which was very well received:

“The awareness component was wonderful, a very good experience. (...) In all the activities of the partners these themes and materials had to be reflected, in all the regions and territories, in the fairs, the markets, it was beautiful and dynamic. Every month we did a national radio program. It had quite an impact, because the people who listened it and were waiting it every month were measured and seen. In the end we closed with a culinary fair in Quetzaltenango, with a excellent press conference. Those who came to present their dishes told us that it was widely publicized and had reached a large population. At the culinary fair they presented their ancestral dishes, which were compiled in a recipe book. It was a great job, very beautiful, and the campaign is called Our Food, Our Identity. It was a lot of work, but many people were reached and closer to the people, face to face, in their language.”

Interview with local partner technical team

58. The use of community radio stations, which have high coverage in the communities, was especially interesting, since these are mainly dedicated to broadcasting religious-themed programs. Still, it was possible to reach agreements with them to include spaces for disseminating the contents of the campaign and the work axes of the program. Nine community radio stations from the municipalities of Tonicapán, Momostenango, Santa María Chiquimula, Sibinal, Tacaná and Sololá, as well as two local television cables joined the campaign, discussing the issues in K'iche, Kaqchikel and Spanish languages. A dissemination and awareness strategy that reached both rural and urban areas and gained importance amid the pandemic, when other actions of the program had to be paralyzed by the sanitary confinement measures.

“It is one of the fundamental strategies to continue raising awareness and achieving changes in attitudes and practices, in people who are at home and listen to these messages. It has had a lot of impact.”

Interview with local partner technical team

59. All actors consulted pointed out the good results of this awareness component, which, thanks to the joint action of the five partners, and their allies such as REDSAG, expanded its scope and impact to many more communities than those participating in the other strategies of the program. Within the campaign framework, 27 communities and 7 associations were sensitized, surpassing the number of 17 communities and 6 associations that was the goal of this component. The campaign also strengthened partner organizations in their work with other projects, as the following testimony points out:

“The campaign process was carried out not only in the 17 communities where Coindi works but also reached more than 8,000 people indirectly, according to monitoring done in Sololá and other departments. It was a consortium work that all the organizations of this program did to spread it in the languages of the different localities, producing several materials. Coindi co-manages one of the local television cables in Sololá, and all the forums and activities carried out in coordination with the municipal commissions, where all the women participated, were broadcast live on that cable. As a result of this awareness campaign, we now have a lot of demand from new communities, who want us to support them, and within the framework of other projects we have increased our coverage.”

Interview with local partner technical team

60. Within the framework of the campaign, were implemented 11 actions of soil conservation, care and protection of the environment and food, seed conservation for the protection of biodiversity, promotion of healthy consumption of food grown on plots, backyards, and roof gardens, among others. Reforestation actions were carried out on land with water sources by planting 3,700 small trees, in coordination with the community authorities, in two municipalities of Concepción Sololá, as well as the development of an agroecological fair on World Food Day, and the pronouncement made regarding World Environment Day in 2020. However, the dedication of the authorities and community organizations to attend emergency situations caused by Covid-19, did not allow reaching the planned goals in terms of coordination actions with community governments and other local actors.

61. CEIBA organization, for its part, carried out awareness-raising actions with children and youth, a fundamental population group for the sustainability that it can give to the results of this component. They held information days on responsible consumption of agroecological foods in the experience called Sustainable Schools, implemented in the first months of 2020 in two rural schools in the communities of Xolbe and Chaquijya in Sololá municipality.

3. PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ADVOCACY ACTIONS AND NETWORKS, AIMED AT CREATING A PUBLIC FRAMEWORK MORE FAVORABLE TO FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, MEETING THE FOOD NEEDS OF INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY.

62. The political advocacy component, which seeks to give institutional sustainability to the achievements of the program, was implemented locally by each partner organizations independently, as a continuation and deepening of their previous lines of action and institutional project objectives, but also including new actions, to broaden its impact. At the national level, on the other hand, the five organizations came together in a common line of political advocacy through their association with REDSAG, supporting the follow-up of three laws that this Network has been promoting for several years: the Water Framework Law , initiative 5070; the economic development proposal for women - DEM Law - initiative 5452; and the proposed framework for the defense of biodiversity.

“At the project level, each partner has its own advocacy process, CDRO with its food security networks, CEIBA with its production self-management groups, COINDI at the COCODES level to be able to influence the participation of women, and the KUCHUB’AL network had proposed advocacy plans at the municipal level. But we all also had a common regional indicator, because we are all part of the REDSAG, with the public policy proposal through a law that would protect biodiversity, because the government is introducing the regulation of living modified organisms, trying that through customs regulations, modified seeds can be brought into the country.”

Interview with local partner technical team

63. The local political advocacy strategy seeks to achieve three results: reaching agreements between territorial and sectoral platforms with local authorities, to promote food security and sovereignty policies; training of women and youth in leadership issues and promotion of food sovereignty; incorporation of women and young people in the boards of directors of local communities and territorial platforms.

64. The first result is the one that has made the least progress concerning the goals set, since only three agreements of the 11 that were the goal of the indicator were reached. Context situations such as the health emergency due to Covid-19, political positions or electoral processes and the substitution of officials in institutions, made it difficult to access the authorities or their willingness to work on the preparation of agreements for the purposes established in the program.

65. SERJUS, which is committed to strengthening local structures to link them with State structures, managed to advance two advocacy processes with the territorial platforms COVISMA and COIM and the agricultural commissions, which are the ones that do the lobbying and negotiation. The first, in Momostenango, where it had already accompanied the formulation of the municipal food security policy that is now being reformulated, and the second in Santa María Chiquimula, where they already have an approved law and an agreement with the municipality that will give it functionality.

“In Santa María Chiquimula, we have made progress, because the current mayor had trained with us, and there we have managed to make more progress. He understands the processes, he is politically trained (...) although there is no guarantee of that, because sometimes the people in that one trusts the most, when it is seen with power changes completely.”

Interview with local partner technical team

66. CEIBA accompanied the third public policy advocacy process in Concepción Sololá. They coordinated with a platform of organizations, the municipal directorate for women and other municipal bodies, and are already in the process of approving the municipal commune's policy.

67. Community groups and some authorities that responded to the calls, participated in the elaboration processes of these policy proposals, and of others that have not received receptivity in the institutions, with the technical support of the partner organizations. They were carried out according to a methodology shared by SERJUS, which included exchanges of experiences with other organizations that had more advanced processes. The proposals presented have to do with strengthening agri-food systems, seeking that municipalities provide goods and resources to producer families, following the provisions of the General Plan for Food Sovereignty.

68. Regarding the training of women and young people in leadership skills, incidence and promotion of food security, responsible consumption, and care for the environment, 72 women were trained, exceeding the goal of 62 that had been planned. In several of the organizations, this political training was implemented comprehensively with training on agroecological techniques and training on gender equality, self-esteem and empowerment.

“In that goal, the main actions were training in political advocacy, planning methodology and advice for lobbying and negotiation, because people are very afraid of communicating and lobbying with the authorities. In the last two years we have put a lot of emphasis on strengthening the capacities of women, because in these two municipalities the indicators, instead of advancing, have regressed. We had a psychologist colleague who went to give them talks on self-esteem and empowerment because the ladies were far behind in her active participation, and that worked quite well.”

Interview with local partner technical team

“One of this program’s fundamental issues is having raised women’s self-esteem, some who were not adhered to the process, knew their rights and now fight for their rights. The empowerment of women’s participation, political empowerment, occupy spaces in the communities, work from their municipalities, be represented in Comudes, in Comusan (Health and Nutrition Commissions).”

Interview with local partner technical team

69. Women’s leadership was also developed through their participation in decision-making spaces, such as the boards of directors of communal governments and territorial and sectoral platforms, a result that, although it did not fully meet the proposed quantitative goal, was very satisfying. Even though patriarchal custom has kept these positions closed to women, a significant number of women were integrated into these spaces to develop their leadership capacities to make decisions about actions that affect their basic and strategic interests, and to propose and participatively discuss proposals that improve the living conditions of their families and communities.

“We trained around 45 women leaders, and of those women we managed to get 17 to enter the COCODES to hold management positions, in community associations or in the municipal coordinators and market committees, where although they are the majority, they do not always hold positions on directors boards. The issue of strengthening their capacities worked, but we did not manage to get the 45 women to occupy positions, but only half.”

Interview with local partner technical team

LIMITATIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM

The incorporation of youth

70. One of the program’s objectives that has had a more limited result has been the incorporation of young people into agroecological production processes. The need for generational change to give sustainability to the rural way of life became evident in the participatory formulation meetings of the program, where data from previous interventions revealed the advanced age of rural producers and community leaders, so it was decided to include them, along with women, among the target population of the intervention.

71. However, the data collected reveals that only a minority of young women joined the actions of the program, and that these young women did not mostly respond to the pattern of single young women without commitment, but were already mothers, some of them they are single mothers, with children and responsibilities on their shoulders.

“About the intergenerational approach, CSOs explain that generational change is needed. Due to the conditions in which families and cultures permeated by adult-centrism are structured, that bridge is still lacking, that strengthening is lacking. However, we find organized young women and men implementing production, entrepreneurship, and political advocacy processes. But they are not the single young people of 20 years that we have in the youth scheme, here they can be married, be 20 years old and have their plot, although they are not the majority, but they are already involved. It is the weakest part of the program.”

Interview with local partner technical team

72. In the municipalities participating in the project, which are among those that throw the most population into migration in the country, agricultural production activities are not attractive to young people. They perceive them as a very hard and demanding way of life, poorly paid, associated with the perpetuation of their conditions of poverty and away from the possibilities offered by modern life. Land tenure schemes in this context also do not offer young people any prospect of building a sustainable future for themselves through their dedication to agricultural activities, since family properties are usually too small to implement productive enterprises on a significant scale, and are further subdivided through generational succession. Also, the distribution of inheritances is entirely in the hands of the adult men of the family, which can dispossess them of the lands they have worked, especially in the case of women, who are usually left out of the distribution of inherited land.

73. Young people are also unable to access positions within the government and decision-making structures of the communities, whose traditional procedures for electing their members exclude young people of both sexes and women of any age. As a result of all these factors, the participation of young people in the actions of the program was not that expected, and it mainly occurred in natural product processing enterprises than in agroecological production itself. Unlike older people, who are more reluctant to learn to use the tools and keep the accounts and records required by the activity of processing products for their commercialization, the young, with better preparation in basic skills such as reading-writing, mathematics and the use of communication technologies, showed greater interest and skill in these activities.

“The young people loved this about the tablets, which we gave them to register and monitor production, participate in meetings, production specialization courses, in concentrates, in poultry livestock management, those courses and those activities if you like them. Young people know how to read and write, and since it is no longer a job to get so dirty, that attracts more their attention.”

Interview with local partner technical team

Climate change

74. The program included among its strategies the introduction of measures to increase the resilience and adaptation of crops and ecosystems to extreme weather events that increasingly affect rural areas. However, in some of the participating communities the climate variability occurred in the years of implementation of the program significantly limited the achievement of the planned results of increasing the production of agroecological food to increase women's income and improve the food sovereignty of the communities.

75. Environmental changes such as decreased rainfall, reduction of water sources, deforestation, loss of the fertile soil layer, temperature fluctuations, increased incidence of pests and diseases in crops, produce low yields of basic traditional crops for the peasant economy such as corn and beans, which reduces income and forces food to be purchased outside the communities at high prices, increasing poverty and malnutrition and boosting migration.

76. Within the framework of the program, some measures and techniques for adaptation and mitigation of the climate change effects were put into practice, such as diversification of crops, collection of rainwater, recycling of gray water, substitution of agrochemicals for organic fertilizers, reforestation and protection of the land from erosion caused by torrential rains, cultivation of native seeds that are more resistant to drought, among others, but these are not enough to face the effects of extreme weather events, which requires a great mobilization of resources and services that is beyond the possibilities of the communities of small rural producers, and that only public institutions can assume.

77. The struggle for water was also included in the political advocacy component of the program, especially due to the participation of the organization Serjus, which has played an important role in the movement demanding a water law at the national level in favor of the communities, against various bills that would give broad power to large companies over the use of water resources.

78. In the community of Racchoquel, in Santa María Chiquimula, for example, agroecological production has been strongly affected by the lack of water, to the point that it has not been possible to satisfy the demand for fresh products to be sold in schools, which are managed to reach an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in charge of food certification, due to the low production that has been obtained, given the restrictions on the availability of water for crop irrigation:

“In the case of vegetable plots, the visited promoter comment that they had access to seeds, which they have to return when they their production grow, but the lack of water is a great limitation to achieve at least three productions a year (...) they have made attempts with the resources available to filter the water and reuse it, but the piped water they have for human consumption is not enough, the flow of the source has already dropped and they only have the liquid twice a week. This is not a viable alternative for their crops in vegetable plots.”
Visit to agroecological plot

The political context

79. The current political context in Guatemala, with a setback in democratic practices and citizen participation, is mentioned as another of the great limitations for achieving the objectives and results of the program, with a government whose policies do not favor the rural population, which is focused on surviving, and resisting the expropriation of their territories to benefit the economic interests of the most powerful classes.

80. The annulment of the agreement with the CICIG and its definitive departure from the country jeopardizes the processes of participation and social auditing, the rule of law, and the defense of the collective rights of belligerent sectors of the country, such as the indigenous and peasant movement. It legitimizes the repressive apparatuses of the government, which service the landed and business oligarchy.

81. "The current context of Guatemala in which we have regressed in human rights, in justice, in democracy, all government systems and apparatuses are co-opted, to authorize licenses for mega projects that seek to appropriate natural resources..."

82. Electoral processes, on the other hand, dismantle community movements, often capturing local leaders for political purposes that distance them from their realities, and exacerbating partisan political differences among their members, which makes it difficult to carry out actions of exchange or community organization, which can give rise to confrontations between their leaderships. The custom of the candidates and politicians of distributing bags of food, construction materials and even money to the neediest population at electoral junctures, in exchange for buying wills, also perpetuates paternalism:

“(...) this has generated that the most vulnerable families, when invited to a program like this, do not want to participate, because they ask what they will have in return, how much cash will be, assuming they will not reintegrate it. This situation is dire to be able to get out of their situation of material poverty.”
Interview with local partner technical team

“The government has been proposing food security for years now, which is to bring to the people affected by a natural disaster a package of food made from processed and refined foods by large processing companies. That is meal, but it is not necessarily food. It does not matter where that food comes from or how it is produced, or if in order to grow this monoculture, they violated the rights of the communities, the rivers and the crops of the small producers of the countryside.”

Interview with strategic partner



4.3 EFFICIENCY

PH.23 Demonstrative plot, Xepatuj II, Nahualá

83. The efficiency analysis of the program seeks to answer the following questions:

- a) **To what extent do programme resources meet the needs of the projects implemented?**
- b) **To what extent have programme resources been used optimally and in a timely manner to contribute to the results?**
- c) **What are the constraints on resource use?**

84. The testimonies collected in this evaluation show that some of the actions planned within the program did not have sufficient resources for their execution, since they required a greater dedication of time, human and material resources than those planned in the programming. Specifically, they mentioned that the communication and social awareness strategy on the issues addressed required the hiring of a specialized consultancy for the design of a communication plan and the development of message dissemination tools, expenses that the budget didn't foresee, since the partner organizations didn't have the necessary technical and methodological expertise to do so, which was demonstrated by the results of the first year of execution of this component.

85. The execution of public policy advocacy actions also required more time and resources than planned, and this was a restriction that difficulted implementation and could be solved thanks to the use of other resources of the partner organizations and the strategic vision and flexibility of program administrators to make changes to budget items and execution schedules.

86. In general, it is considered that the items allocated to the payment of personnel were insufficient to cover all the needs of the program, a problem that drags the activity of international cooperation for development in general, which in recent years has been restricting the percentage of funds for the payment of personnel within the budgets of the interventions, and which was especially complicated in an intervention of this type that, due to its nature and its extension in the territory, required the hiring of specialists in the different topics addressed, and of coordinators assigned to the different departments where the actions were carried out.

87. One element that reduced the efficiency in the management of the resources assigned to the actions of the program was the delay of several months in the availability of the funds, which at the beginning forced the financing of the activities through loans, and in the definition of formats and procedures for reporting and financial monitoring, which, together with changes in the requirements regarding accountability, slowed down the processes and required the repetition of procedures already carried out.

88. The partner organizations in implementing the intervention made excellent use of the program's resources, generating synergies between them and with the other projects that each had on their agenda, to complement the available resources and enhance the effectiveness and impact of the actions and strategies implemented. In the communications component, for example, they coordinated the use of all the media and networks that each of them had and could access through their local partners, even the REDSAG media, with which they were able to extend the reach of the campaign far beyond the specific territories of the intervention.

89. This coordination of efforts between the partners was possible thanks to several factors, such as the prior knowledge and trust between them, but also to the clarity of objectives and strategies established by the strategic direction of the program, whose action monitoring system sought periodic spaces for exchange, reflection and joint evaluation of the processes, which allowed the reorientation of some of them to overcome the obstacles and limitations that arose:

“The way in which the funds are used in this program is very valuable, to coordinate actions with the funds of other organizations like ours, which are added to other types of initiatives, where they put some resources and we complement, and it strengthens all the parties that participate and the work we do collectively. That favors the unity of the organizations and their articulation. It is a good practice that strengthens the entire system, because the work that we do at the national level, they do at the regional, local and municipal levels, and doing that, we feed each other back, and to the extent that we achieve more unity we make more strength in the work we do.”

Interview with local partner technical staff

90. On the other hand, the administrative management of the program responded efficiently to the contingent situations that arose throughout its implementation, such as the crisis caused by Covid-19, which required changes in the distribution of budget items and the execution schedules, to meet the urgent needs and new conditions and priorities of the territories and population groups participating in the intervention.



PH.24 Collecting caulifolwer in Chuicumes, Concepción Sololá

91. The evaluation of the sustainability criteria seeks to answer the following questions of the program evaluation matrix:

- a) **What is the potential for sustainability of the intervention after the end of the programme in financial terms (autonomy of partners and beneficiaries)?**
- b) **What is the potential for sustainability of the intervention after the end of the programme in technical terms (capacity building and skills)?**
- c) **What is the potential for sustainability of the intervention after the end of the programme in social terms (ownership and accountability for continued results)?**
- d) **What is the potential for sustainability of the intervention after the end of the programme in political terms (analytical and influencing capacities)?**

92. The program **social sustainability**, within the target communities of intervention, is given by the strengthening of capacities and the organization of the people participating in the implemented actions, and by the inclusion of other members of the families of the participating women and of community authorities, which give legitimacy and recognition to the activities carried out. The various training strategies put into practice trained a majority group of women and some men as agroecological promoters to carry out crops and soil and water care techniques in their demonstration plots and as leaders to replicate that knowledge acquired among their neighbors and other members of their community. In addition to the agroecological promoters, community monitors were identified, one in each community, equipped with tools and skills to continue monitoring the producers' work beyond the program. These people are associated in territorial platforms of agroecological producers that meet regularly and have a governance structure to follow up on advocacy work and participation in municipal councils on the issue of food sovereignty, advocacy and participation that broaden the temporal scope of progress made. They constitute in their communities a social capital with installed capacities, which give sustainability to the results and changes achieved with the intervention.

“Apart from the agroecological promoters, a community monitor was identified in each community, who is like the spokesperson responsible for seeing that the women continue to produce. Now that the program is over, both the promoters and the monitors keep working and continue to provide this accompaniment in the communities. The sustainability of the program is through these promoters and

monitors. It is volunteering that they do in their community to continue supporting the agroecology work and also that of gender.”

Interview with local partner technical team

93. The Covid-19 crisis strengthened, in some way, the social sustainability of the results of the program, since it demonstrated the feasibility and importance of having food and medicine produced locally and based on local resources, for the subsistence of the communities, at times of shortages and scarcity of products from the market.

94. At the level of the partner organizations of the program there is also an **institutional sustainability** of the results achieved and the strategies put into practice, since they are inscribed, deepen and give continuity to the lines of action established in their strategic plans, and many of the people who are part of these organizations are inhabitants of the same communities with which they work and share their dynamics and problems. With the actions of the program, the personnel of the organizations have also reinforced their training in the topics and approaches dealt with and their commitment to continue advancing in their struggles, which are far-reaching and transcend the temporary scope of the intervention:

“In the framework of the program, we also integrated a Coordinating Table for the mainstreaming of the gender approach in organizations, progress has been made in the gender diagnosis, in internal training and discussion processes, because we are aware that we have to train ourselves also in those subjects to be able to promote it in the communities. Processes and workshops have been held with mixed personnel, and we already have a 2020-2024 Pro-Equity Plan.”

Interview with local partner technical team

95. Regarding its **technical and cultural sustainability**, the program's actions have been designed based on local resources, traditions and knowledge, rescuing ancestral knowledge, the principles of the Mayan worldview and local resources to improve food sovereignty and environmental sustainability of these territories. Simple and inexpensive methods and procedures have been put into practice for water harvesting and treatment, soil protection, crop rotation and diversification, rescue and the creation of native seed banks to avoid the need to buy seeds for crops, production of organic fertilizers from garden waste and animal husbandry, which are all activities that can be replicated by other members of the communities:

“In various aspects the program contributed, from the implementation of technologies, procedures and capacities for soil protection, use of water for production, promoting the use of native seeds, issues that do not require further procedures because they are already in the region, keep your food healthy and nutritious. Use of organic fertilizers, the organization of women and promoters for the production and marketing of their products. In terms of infrastructure, the implementation of water technologies, source water collection, rainwater collection, drip systems, mini-irrigation, pipes, storage tanks, etc.”

Interview with local partner technical team

96. The economic activities of generation and management of resources have demonstrated, throughout the program, their effectiveness in improving the economic autonomy of the participating women, both in agroecological production, in the processing of raw materials through entrepreneurship, and in the marketing of their products. The program has provided, in addition to technical knowledge for production and processing, inputs for production, seed capital, techniques for saving and managing resources and businesses, equipment and services for marketing, which have already produced results in the improvement of economic conditions of its beneficiaries. They have become part of their customs, survival strategies and those of their families, which gives them sustainability over time and a high demonstrative capacity to be emulated by other people inside and outside their communities. Creating self-saving groups also increases economic sustainability after external intervention, because it facilitates savings and credit for their enterprises.

97. In addition to the economic autonomy that the participating women gained with these activities, agroecological practices and the principles of food sovereignty demonstrated a high value for families and communities amid the supply crisis of necessities produced by Covid. 19, where food grown in home gardens and farms and medicines made with natural products from the land were an important help to alleviate needs that at that time could not be met by other means.

“The association of producers continues to work, the women who were provided with supplies to produce and continue to sell them, participate in the cantonal markets created as a result of Covid, when they could not leave their communities but they could sell in the same communities, and from their homes too. In the orchards, for example, the women continue to sow and rotate their crops, they continue to process their plants for the products they make, natural medicine, shampoos, all of this is active at the moment. If another program is approved, we will continue, but the work is already sustainable due to the capacities that we leave installed in the communities, in the personnel, so that, whether we work in COINDI or not, we make that choice to continue protecting and defending our territories.”

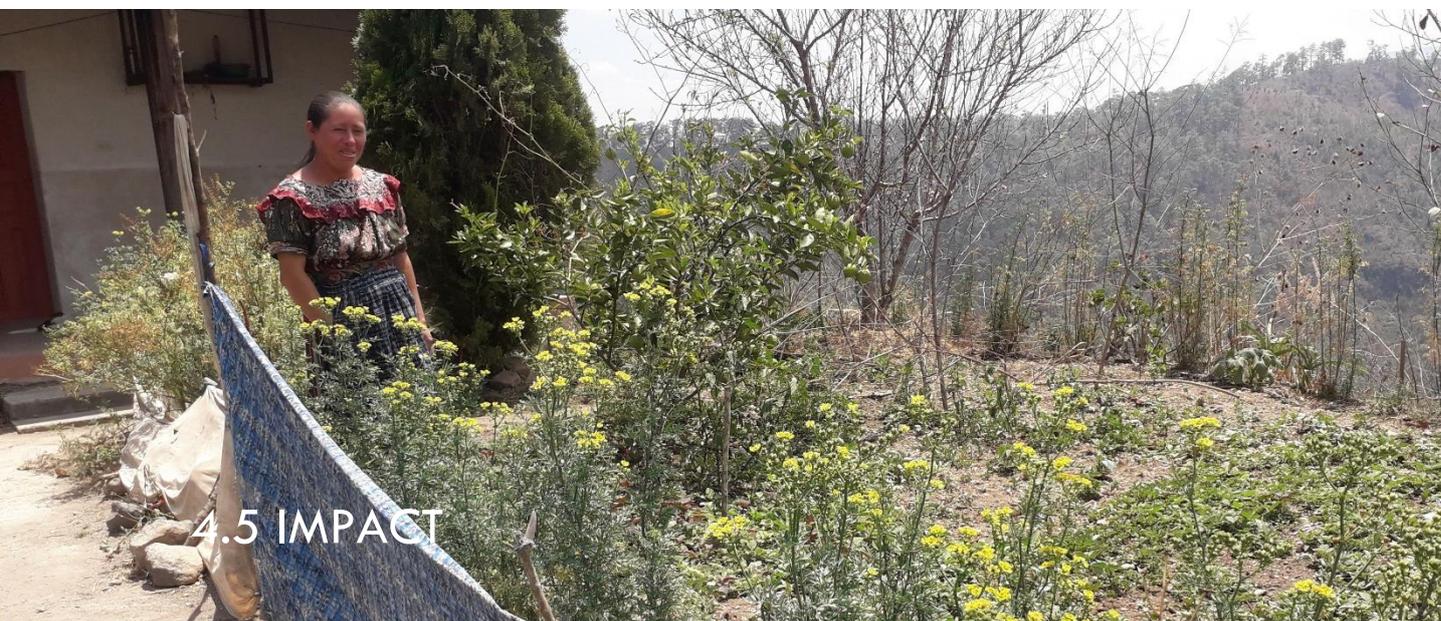
Interview with local partner technical team

98. However, this **economic sustainability** faces multiple threats, due to the situation of extreme need of many of the participating families, whose economic vulnerability may prevent them from affording the purchase of the raw materials necessary to maintain their production processes, despite the resources provided by the program in the implementation of these undertakings:

“In the municipality of Momostenango, three enterprises have been visited, the first is the production of cereal atole, but the promoter has indicated that they are not making the cereal due to the high cost of basic grains. They have suspended production, so for the moment, they have no profit. As an investment of the program they have had two mills, seed capital to obtain cereals, and containers.”

Visit to enterprises

99. On the other hand, **environmental sustainability** also faces substantial threats, despite the implementation of soil and aquifer protection techniques and optimization of water use, due to climate variability that affects the availability of resources that, like water, are indispensable to carry out the productive activities promoted by the program.



PH.25 Patio orchard, Santa María Chiquimula

100. The impact analysis focuses, in theory, on determining the net effects attributable to the evaluated action and, therefore, requires an evaluation design that isolates the influence of other factors, to determine if the changes generated are direct results of the action of an intervention. But given the nature of the program as a social process that pursues intangible, long-term changes that are complex to measure, it is very difficult to fit it into any logical model that requires making impact forecasts. For this reason, we consider it reasonable to analyze the effects and impacts of the project in terms of contributions framed in a Contribution to Results approach, which recognizes that changes are generated as a result of many combined

factors. Therefore, this criteria seeks to understand the contribution to changes of the project's actions in combination with other factors in the context that are beyond its control.

101. For this analysis we start from the fact that the program has already had a development time in some of its components that allows us to recognize the effects and impacts produced, while others are still in a very incipient phase to be able to do so, so we only will suppose future impacts that depend on the continuity of the actions begun to be developed.

102. In this part, we will answer the following questions of the evaluation matrix:

- a) **To what extent have the changes achieved led (or are likely to lead) to direct or indirect social, economic, political and environmental benefits in the areas and countries of intervention?**
- b) **To what extent have the changes achieved led (or are likely to lead) to direct or indirect negative social, economic, political and environmental effects in the areas and countries of intervention?**
- c) **To what extent has the programme contributed to changing gender equality?**

SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM EFFECTS that are direct results of the intervention

Empowerment of women

103. The women participating in the program not only gained access to knowledge that allowed them to know their rights and understand how many of the activities and relationships they established in their daily lives violated those rights, but they also learned personal tools, through self-esteem, leadership and communication workshops in which they participated, to overcome feelings of incapacity and situations of subordination to which they were subjected, and dare to defend and claim their rights and exercise their autonomy as citizens and adults.

Improvement in the autonomy and economic production capacity of women

104. The implementation of agroecological production activities and their commercialization allowed women to implement the knowledge and strategies acquired, put into practice and demonstrate their new capacities, and exercise their autonomy to make decisions about the organization of their means of production, the destination of its products, and the use of the economic resources obtained by its commercialization.

Changes in gender relations within families and communities

105. The workshops on gender equity in which the agroecological producers participated and also some of the male members of their families, allowed them to distinguish between their productive and reproductive tasks, and take advantage of their new economic activities to redistribute the tasks among the members of their families. Their new status as productive people, with the economic capacity to contribute to family support, increased their ability to make decisions about the distribution of both obligations and available resources and to change the imbalances that consistently tend to favor men over women. The training on leadership and the recognition of the local government structures for the program's actions opened the possibility for some women to become part of the boards of directors of these bodies, acquiring a new role of more significant influence in decision-making at the community level.

Improved availability of fresh and healthy food in families and communities

106. The initiatives of agroecological production with practices of adaptation and diversification of crops, raising of farm animals and elimination of agrochemicals, etc. increased the availability of healthy and nutritious food to improve the family and community diet through self-consumption, exchange, and the sale of surpluses to other families in the communities.

Increased community awareness of the importance of agroecology, responsible consumption, food sovereignty and the recovery of ancestral practices and knowledge.

107. The awareness campaign on food sovereignty and responsible consumption Our food, our identity, reached many more people and communities than was planned, as corroborated by the measurement indicators of its scope. Its effects were noted in the good reception of actions such as the games and raffles held in the communities, the gastronomic fair of ancestral recipes and the markets and fairs of agroecological products, and in the demonstrations of people who waited in their communities for the periodic transmissions of the programs, videos and radio spots that were broadcast by different media, and in the request that, motivated by the campaign, several communities made to the partner organizations of the program to join in participating in their actions and initiatives.

"As a product of this awareness campaign, we now have a lot of demand from new communities, who want us to support them. And within the framework of other projects this year we increased our coverage."

Interview with local partner technical team

MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM IMPACTS that can be achieved with the contribution of the program

108. **Valorization of food sovereignty as a collective right**, through the strengthening of agroecological initiatives on a larger scale, the dissemination of the demonstrative effect of their results, and the effect of information and awareness campaigns and political advocacy for the implementation of plans to their benefit.

109. **Promotion of the use of appropriate production technologies** for the conservation of the environment, through the dissemination of the demonstrative effects of the results of their application, and the association with academic institutions that advance knowledge about these technologies, and include them in their study programs.

110. **Changes in patterns of consumption and use of natural resources**. The demonstrative effect of the generalization of agroecological production initiatives together with awareness campaigns about the harmful effects of current consumption patterns and the advantages of agroecological practices for families, communities and the conservation of the environment, can influence a change towards patterns of consumption and use of resources healthier and more responsible with the survival of future generations.

111. **Decrease in gender and domestic violence**. The changes in gender relations that occur within families, thanks to the empowerment and economic autonomy achieved by women through the program's actions, can achieve, if they become general, change patterns of behavior and power imbalances that have intrafamily and gender violence among its worse manifestations.

112. **Decrease in malnutrition in families**. The diversification of crops, increased agroecological production for self-consumption and other practices promoted through the program must be institutionalized and supported with State resources to improve the nutrition of families in rural areas, which is a lack that affects the future of childhood and the country.

CHANGES IN GENDER EQUITY

"It is a very complicated situation in Guatemala where there is still a lot of sexism. The land belongs to men, they decide on resources, on women's bodies, on women's time..."

Interview with local partner technical team

113. Despite the resistance that exists to the introduction of changes in the strong power imbalances between men and women in this context, some progress can be identified as a contribution of the program, according to the members of the accompanying organizations and the beneficiary women themselves. The parallel technical and socio-political training strategy, through training in agroecological principles and techniques and the protection of natural resources and workshops on human rights, gender equity and recovery of self-esteem, has allowed the changes made in productive activities of the participating women to translate into changes in the value and image they have of themselves, and in gradual transformations in gender relations within their families.

“Now my husband accompanies me in the training. When he doesn’t have job as a mason, he also helps me at home, prepares his food when I’m busy, helps me make the galleys for the animals, prepare the land for the vegetables, there are changes because only my husband worked, but now I also have money and I decide how I am going to spend it and we help each other, he helps me with kitchen chores.” Interview with women agroecological promoter

“With the sensitization processes, women have defined the jobs they do, and those roles that were traditionally theirs are distributed in the families, and they are integrating their partners in agricultural work in terms of preparing plots, production (...) The other thing that they value a lot is that their work is made visible. Now they can differentiate between reproductive and productive work. They also state that they can access resources such as small seed capital, they can manage finances, plan their capital savings and establish their own businesses.”

Interview with local partner technical team

114. The women consulted stated that now they can speak, propose, and decide what they want to produce, when and how they want to do it. The autonomy achieved in the productive and economic aspect has been extended to other areas of their lives, increasing their ability to decide for themselves as adults, without having to ask for authorization from the men of the family as it is the tradition. Incorporating the gender approach from the Mayan cosmivision, which is based on the complementarity between the different, and also including some men, brought by their wives, in the actions of agroecological production and training in the gender approach, has contributed to the understanding about the need for changes not only for the benefit of women, but of all family and community members:

115. Through the training, they have learned to manage their money, form solidarity savings groups that allow them to have the capital to carry out ventures or cover unforeseen expenses and make them responsible to the other members of the groups to maintain the monthly contributions. Knowing their rights also helps them limit the gender-based violence they suffer. The changes are noticeable within families, where women now act in a different way and do formative work with their children and husband, who begin to recognize the importance of the role of women, and to accept a more equitable distribution of both the resources and assets available such as care tasks and household chores.

“The women, now that they have space for their production, it cannot be said that this land is permanent for them because changing the issue of land ownership in the families for men is very complicated, but they have managed to negotiate with the men of their family to give them that space and that resource to exercise their autonomy as a subject of rights. They no longer control their schedules, they do not have to ask for authorization, they say that these things have changed in their homes with the activities of this program.”

Interview with local partner technical team

116. Among those who most appreciate the changes, are women who have established businesses or who have surplus crops and go to sell their products to peasant markets, whether they are cantonal markets, or those located in the municipal capitals. Carrying out this activity requires them to put their new skills and abilities into practice, to organize their production for sale, to resolve, in agreement with other producers, the logistics of transfers and the setting up of stalls, to entrust other members of their family with the care of the house, the orchards and the farm animals during their absence, interact and negotiate the prices of their products with customers in the markets and handle money in transactions. It is a strategy that, beyond the economic benefits it brings to them and their families, has great potential for transformation on a personal level and in their relationships with others. It helps them overcome feelings of incapacity, dependence, undervaluation, which many women in this environment have about themselves, and makes them feel useful, risk making decisions, verify their results in practice and be respected by them, thus *internalizing their new image of people capable of taking charge of their lives.*

“The important thing is that now we make the difference between what is consumed and what is sold, which must be healthy but must also have a different price, because it is difficult for the land to adapt to organic products again. We, women, have many capacities for planting and managing the money from what we sell.”

Interview with woman agroecological promoter

“Relationships between the couple and the home, and with the children, are changed, because in the Quiche culture the relationship with children is terrible, because the sons, even if they are 12 years old, are the ones who rule the house in the absence of dads, just because they are men. The ones that changed the most were those that participated in the markets and in the enterprises. Those ladies did notice, and the economic part had a lot of influence on that.” Interview with local partner technical team

117. However, the changes in gender relations at the community level have been more challenging to achieve, despite the training that many women received to exercise leadership in their territories. Although there are some cases of women who have gone on to hold management positions in their local government bodies, where men have shown solidarity with them to adapt meeting times to their ability to attend, most of the women consulted testify that this is a barrier that has not yet been broken:

“Women do not participate in the COCODE or as authorities in the community, until now there is one woman, but only men participate, it is difficult for women to be in positions of authority, in that we still need to help women.” Focal group with agroecological promoters

COVID 19 CRISIS

118. The analysis of the Covid-19 pandemic impact on the program will seek to answer the following questions:

- a) **To what extent has the Covid-19 crisis had an impact (negative or positive) on the achievement of results and outcomes?**
- b) **What were the success factors and stumbling blocks in the responses to Covid-19?**
- c) **Were the emergency measures taken the best options?**
- d) **What can we learn from the Covid-19 crisis in terms of disaster preparedness?**

119. The Covid-19 pandemic drastically affected the population with whom the program works, restricting their economic resource production activities due to the impossibility of traveling to their workplaces, the closure of companies and small businesses, the shortage and increased cost of essential inputs for consumption and for the agricultural activity of small producers, weakening the peasant economy and exacerbating the structural food crisis in which these people live.

120. Confinement also increased the risk of infant mortality due to the crisis in the health system and the interruption of vaccine monitoring, and affected family life, increasing the chance that women and children suffer from gender and intrafamily violence.

121. To limit the negative effects of this crisis, the program's partner organizations reviewed the intervention strategies for 2020: they postponed all group activities to the second half of the year, increased the supply of seeds and other supplies to agroecological producers, and implemented actions to virtual and conventional information on the prevention of Covid-19 to compensate for the lack of information on the pandemic in rural areas.

“In times of pandemic, we gave supplies in pylons and seeds so that people could put into practice agroecology techniques, of productive diversification in their orchards in the patio of their house. We introduced fruit trees, vegetables and animals, to diversify a system that was basically based on corn and beans, and with the introduction of some artisanal irrigation techniques, greenhouses, eco-filters, to be able to use gray water for irrigation.” Interview with local partner technical team

122. The conditions imposed by the confinement promoted the development of distance training methodologies, taking advantage of the use of virtual platforms to continue with the training and support of groups and leaders and to raise awareness through social networks in the promotion of food sovereignty and the environmental care. Budget items were used for activities that could not be carried out now, for the purchase of tablets and phone recharges so that the promoters could hold virtual group workshops, and videos were made of the training modules, which people accessed via Facebook. And in some of the partner

organizations, whose technicians were residents of the same communities with which they worked, they were able to continue with face-to-face training in the field.

123. However, despite all these efforts, the exchange and practical training activities were reduced or stopped for a long period, and the distance training activities did not have the same results:

"We had to change the budget. During those nine months, instead of the expected expenses of food and transportation, they allowed us to buy airtime for communications through telephones, and it was not the same, people stopped participating, no matter how much we tried to include popular education in these types of activities, it was complicated for them and for us, it did not work 100%, it would work about 50%."
Interview with local partner technical team

124. But the Covid-19 pandemic also highlighted the need for a food production system and consumption from the community, strengthening the importance of food sovereignty. The pandemic's beginning coincided with the harvest of basic grains, vegetables, seasonal fruits and medicinal plants, which favored the families of agroecological producers and their communities, who were able to have fresh food that they could not acquire by other means. The practices of the agroecological model, which makes use of the resources of the territory, such as the manure of the animals and the leaves for the elaboration of organic fertilizers, and of their own grasses and seeds, allowed the exchange of food and supplies for planting in the period of confinement.

"But the women say that it also affected them positively because today we value having food on hand more than ever. Cantonal markets with sanitary measures were implemented. In the orchards they had medicinal plants to make the compounds and they sold natural medicine to other families. That was highly valued."
Interview with local partner technical team

125. Faced with the impossibility of moving to the municipal capitals to sell surplus production, the organizations implemented cantonal peasant markets, which allowed the communities to access natural foods, free of agrochemicals, and favored food sovereignty and the rescue of knowledge ancestral present in native foods and medicines.

126. In the absence of direct measures from the government, community leadership was reinforced by the organization to make its own sanitaries cordons, control access to the communities, and promote the use of medical practices and the exchange and sale of food. Through the territorial and sectoral platforms, the provision of missing food and biosafety material was managed with the municipal authorities and instances.

5. CONCLUSIONS



5. CONCLUSIONS

PH.26 Cover photo: Water storage, Chuicumes, Concepción Sololá

RELEVANCE AND ADAPTABILITY

127. The intervention is highly relevant since it responds to fundamental structural problems that have been identified over years of work with the participating populations, such as those that impede the comprehensive development of these peoples and violate their rights to food security and sovereignty. The program has been formulated in a participatory manner with the local partner organizations, and its strategies are part of its lines of action and institutional objectives and are nourished by its work experience in these territories, with a comprehensive approach that addresses the complexity of the problems and their causes. In the same way, the intervention involves the relevant local actors to achieve the planned results, and takes into account the legislative and cultural frameworks of the context in which is implemented.

128. On the other hand, the program has been able to adapt to the unexpected circumstances during its years of execution, making the pertinent changes to meet the priorities and needs of the groups with which it works, without losing focus on the strategic objectives traced.

EFFECTIVENESS

129. The program has effectively achieved the specific objective that participating communities and community associations build platforms to improve their production and self-management systems. The promotion of family agroecological initiatives has been the most effective among the three strategies implemented, since in addition to an improvement in the economic and nutritional situation, it has achieved changes in gender relations in the couples and families of the participating women, especially visible in the cases of those who sell their products in the markets, an activity in which they have been able to put into practice all the new skills and abilities developed.

130. The strategy of raising awareness of the principles of agroecology, responsible consumption and food sovereignty through communication and awareness campaigns, was also effective in achieving its objectives, even exceeding its goals. However, the third component, political advocacy, although it managed to train many women in skills, abilities and knowledge to hold positions of responsibility and carry out advocacy actions, was not as effective in ensuring that they could access those spaces of decision-making, nor to commit the authorities in the implementation of policies favorable to the sovereignty and food security of the peoples.

131. In terms of cross-cutting approaches, it has been possible to incorporate the gender approach in all actions effectively, but progress towards intergenerationality has not been achieved.

132. The main obstacles that limited the effectiveness of the program's actions were: the strong power imbalances between men and women that persist at the community level; the lack of interest of young people in agricultural activities; the land tenure schemes, that deny women and young people access to their property; the country's political environment, which favors the interests of the agro-export industry to the detriment of those of the population and small farmers in the countryside; the climatological variability, which affects the availability of water to ensure production in the enterprises.

EFFICIENCY

133. Although the funds available to the program were insufficient to cover some of its needs, especially concerning the hiring of specialized personnel to carry out specific actions, the resources available in the intervention were used efficiently, generating synergies between partner organizations and with other strategic partners, which made possible to carry out all the planned actions, including

134. expanding its scope and coverage. The flexibility and strategic vision of the program management also made it possible to make the necessary adjustments and adaptations to address changes in the priorities and conditions of the context and of the program subject population, caused by unexpected events such as the Covid-19 crisis, without losing focus on the planned strategic objectives.

SUSTAINABILITY

135. The results of the program have high social, technological and cultural sustainability, since they have left in the communities a social capital formed and with installed capacities to strengthen the social changes promoted, continue with the productive initiatives implemented, and to transmit their new knowledge, principles and practices to other members of their families and communities. The techniques and strategies put into practice are based on the resources of the territory, on the knowledge and ancestral traditions of the target population and on the priorities of the participants, who have developed a strong appropriation of them, incorporating them within their means of subsistence, generating a demonstrative effect that makes them easily appropriated by their relatives and neighbors.

136. The incorporation of these strategies within the lines of action of the partner organizations, thanks to their alignment with their institutional objectives, generates the commitment to give them continuity and increases the sustainability of the program's results.

137. However, the condition of extreme economic vulnerability of the families and the threats of the context, especially about climate variability and the availability of land for production, constitute challenges for the sustainability of the results of the intervention.

IMPACT

138. In short and medium term, the main effects of the program can be identified as: the *Empowerment of women*, with the increase in their self-esteem and the putting into practice of their leadership capacities; *Improvement in the autonomy and economic production capacity of women* who participated in the training, production and entrepreneurship actions; *Changes in gender relations* within families, motivated by new attitudes and activities of women; *Improvement in the availability of varied, fresh and healthy foods* in participating families and communities; Increased community awareness about the importance of agroecology, food sovereignty and responsible consumption.

139. In the medium and long term, the program can contribute to the achievement of impacts such as the *valuation of food sovereignty as a collective right*; the *promotion of the use of appropriate production technologies*; *Changes in patterns of consumption and use of natural resources*; the *reduction of gender and intra-family violence*; the *decrease in child malnutrition in Guatemala*.

6. LESSONS LEARNED



6. LEASSONS LEARNED

PH.27 Cover photo: Gray water channeling to the filter, Racchoquel, Momostenango

- 1) *Work with the theory of change.* Working with the program's theory of change, as a basis for its participatory design and its monitoring and evaluation throughout the process, helped to maintain the strategic vision of what was wanted to be achieved, allowing implementation strategies to be adapted to the work of the different partner organizations and make adjustments and changes to maintain the relevance of the intervention in the face of unexpected situations in the context, without losing track of progress towards the desired objectives. Using the theory of change to monitor the progress of the program stimulates reflection and helps to maintain focus on the strategic objective, and to go beyond the simple measurement of compliance with activities that does so much damage to development projects. fulfillment of activities

“I learned there that there is no single model or method to be able to design a theory of change. And this one that E&F used helped me a lot to understand how all the actions and processes are linked to be able to generate changes at various levels.” Interview with local partner technical staff

- 2) *Flexibility in the strategic direction* of the program is the basis for maintaining its relevance and adaptation to the conditions and changes in the context and the participating actors.
- 3) *Integrating men* in analysis and actions to incorporate the gender approach is essential, not only to avoid family confrontations that can generate or worsen situations of violence, but also to be able to change power relations, especially at the community level, where much remains to be done to advance towards a balance of power between women and men.
- 4) *To integrate young people*, it is first necessary to know the causes that keep them away from rural areas and agricultural activities to design actions aimed at overcoming these causes.
- 5) *The power of synergies and complementarities between different organizations* produces achievements that are not attributable to this program but from which one can learn, such as positioning agroecology in universities, or formulating a production strategy based on agroecology by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.
- 6) *The combination of awareness-raising and training actions with productive actions* that attend to people's most urgent needs has much more potential for transforming consciousness than implementing these actions separately.
- 7) *The use of distance communication technologies* has great potential for working with rural communities, which until now has been untapped, as demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 8) *The reimbursement of seed capital* in the case of female entrepreneurs is a good strategy, because the programs that encourage paternalism or welfare, produce dependency in the population. Still, now women see that it is necessary to repay these credits so that all the members of the savings groups can count on capital to face personal situations or continue with their enterprises.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS



7. RECOMMENDATIONS

PH.28 Cover photo: Harvesting peppers, Santa María Chiquimula

For local partners

1. Work on participatory diagnoses with children and young people from rural areas, to find keys that allow them to stay in the countryside and join agroecological production activities. Take advantage of the potential of digital communication media and the skill and interest that new generations have in its handling, to incorporate them into programs aimed at young people.
2. Systematize the results and lessons learned from CEIBA's experience with Sustainable Schools in order to deepen and broaden the experience, designing and proposing coordination plans between agroecological producer organizations and state and municipal educational institutions, where, in addition to teach in a practical way the benefits of agroecology and responsible consumption, the identity, knowledge and ancestral traditions of these peoples are rescued and valued among childhood and adolescence.
3. Strengthen the promotion of rural agroecological markets, which benefit communities with the availability of fresh and healthy food, save them from having to go to the municipal capitals to buy, give an outlet to the productive surpluses of local producers, make visible and legitimize their practices and are spaces for the exchange of knowledge and the dissemination of capacities and strategies between the producers and their neighbors.
4. Incorporate work with men in the mainstreaming of the gender approach, without losing sight of the fact that there are issues that have to be worked separately with each gender to later share them. Incorporating the gender approach with children, both in families and in schools, is the only way to overcome gender inequalities in future generations.
5. Work on access to remote communication technologies for the inhabitants of rural communities, based on knowledge of the conditions of their specific context, not only in their training so that they learn to use it, but also with municipal governments to close the gaps that prevent the use of these technologies in these territories. Investigate how to innovate to translate popular education methodologies into tools for distance learning.
6. Work on community water management, which is an essential element to promote agroecological production and food sovereignty, establishing articulations and agreements with non-state organizations that today manage these services, given the abandonment of their provision by the government.

For local partners and E&F:

7. Address the issue of access to land tenure in rural communities by women and young people, so that they can be integrated into training and entrepreneurship programs for agroecological production, with the guarantee of reaping the benefits of the product of their efforts. Promote community diagnostic actions on the effects of inequity in access to ownership of land that affects women and on the possibilities of financing for the purchase of co-owned land. Work with municipal governments so that rural producer associations could have access to municipal land banks, given the scarcity and shortage of land for agroecological production in those territories.
8. Incorporate the issue of climate change in the political advocacy agenda, because the adaptation and mitigation actions that agroecological producers can take will never be enough to face a problem that requires a mobilization of resources and services that only public institutions can assume.
9. To reach the mainstreaming of the intergenerational approach in the interventions, it is necessary to start with the accompanying organizations themselves before being able to work with the grassroots, to analyze how intergenerational relationships occur within them, what opening is there for young people to occupy positions of responsibility, how are the power relations. In this, much can be learned from the process that

the gender issue has followed, which at first was an approach driven by cooperation, but today is already incorporated into organizations where many empowered women demanding their spaces.

For E&F:

10. Continue to encourage the establishment of associations and collaboration agreements between organizations, flexible enough to allow the different strengths of each of them to be deployed, and guided by common strategic and political objectives, rather than by the fulfillment of activities, so that they can be incorporated into their institutional agendas and working methodologies.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. List of documents examined

- Annual narrative report of the specific objective 2020
- Scores of Performance OS3 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020
- Lessons learned 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020
- Mid-term evaluation report of the DGD programme in Guatemala.
- Country annual reports 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020.
- Report of the meeting between partners. Nicaragua and Guatemala, 2019
- E&F Five-year program 2017-2021
- Performance measurement system Guatemala
- General conclusions promoter meeting 2017
- Relevant findings systematization political advocacy

ANNEX 2. Consulted stakeholders

| CONSULTED PERSONS AND VISITED COMMUNITIES | ROLE IN THE PROGRAMME | APPLIED TECHNIQUE AND MODE |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Angélica López y Sarah Crosset | Entraide & Fraternité technical staff | Semi-structured virtual interviews |
| Leonica Pocop Saloj | Local partner technical staff (COINDI) | |
| Awex Mejía Cipriano | Local partner technical staff (CEIBA) | |
| Claudia Ruiz | Local partner technical staff (SERJUS) | |
| David Paredes | Strategic partner technical staff (REDSAG) | |
| Patricia Verbauwede | Strategic partner technical staff (Broederlijkdelen) | |
| Community Racchoquel, Momostenango municipality | Attended community | Structured observation |
| Rosa Chuyuch y Carlos Chuyuch | Agroecological promoters | Semi-structured in-person interviews |
| María del Rosario Díaz Pérez | Agroecological promoter | |
| Communities Xebe y Centro, Santa María Chiquimula municipality | Attended communities | Structured observation |
| Juana Tzoy | Agricultural promoter | Semi-structured in-person interviews |
| Juana Chacaj | Agricultural promoter | |
| Esteban Matías | ADESMA store manager | |
| Community Xepatuj II, Nahualá municipality | Attended community | Structured observation |
| Juan Saj Ixtos | Agricultural promoter | Semi-structured in-person interviews |
| Catarina Mas | Entrepreneur | |
| Claudia Guarchaj | Entrepreneur | |
| Community Santa María El Tablón, Sololá municipality | Attended community | Structured observation |
| Devora Chichoy Carolina Julaj Cristina Curacan Juana Ajquech | Agricultural promoters | Focal group |
| Community Chucumes, Concepción Sololá municipality | Attended community | Structured observation |
| Fellisa | Local partner technical staff (CEIBA) | Non-structured in-person interviews |
| David | ADESMA association staff | |